

Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for recommending a product using a computer implemented expert system, the method comprising:
  - utilizing the expert system to determine problem domain information via interaction between a live human agent and a customer;
  - utilizing the expert system to determine need information of the customer via interaction between the live human agent and the customer, wherein the need information relates to telecommunications needs of the customer;
  - inputting the customer need information into the expert system, wherein the act of inputting the customer need information into the expert system is performed by the live human agent;
  - transforming the customer need information into a trait, the trait being characteristic of a telecommunications product of relevance to the customer, the telecommunications product of relevance being selected from a plurality of available telecommunications products; ~~and~~
  - calculating a rating of a at least three telecommunications products within the plurality of available telecommunications products, wherein the act of calculating the ratings is performed by the expert system; and
  - presenting an output comprising a recommended solution, a compatible solution, and a not recommended solution, wherein each of said recommended solution, said compatible solution and said not recommended solution are alternative solutions selected from the plurality of available telecommunications products by the expert system, and wherein said output is generated by said expert system.
  
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein utilizing the expert system to determine the need information of the customer comprises asking questions provided by the

expert system and inputting the customer need information into the expert system via a graphical user interface serviced by an agent computer.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
 summarizing the ratings of the plurality of available telecommunications products; and  
 providing explanation of the ratings of the plurality of available telecommunications products.
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein the summary of the ratings of the plurality of available telecommunications products comprises at least one of a the recommended solution, a the compatible solution, and a the not recommended solution.
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of available telecommunications products comprises a service.
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising communicating the rating from the live human agent to the customer; and  
 wherein the calculating the rating of the at least three telecommunications products within the plurality of available telecommunications products is performed in real time.
7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the expert system employs a fuzzy value in calculating the rating of the at least three telecommunications products.
8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the expert system employs a crisp value in calculating the rating of the at least three telecommunications products.
- 9 - 40. (canceled)
41. (Currently Amended) An expert system that is operable for recommending a product, the expert system comprising:

a computer network;

a live human agent interface, communicatively coupled to the computer network, comprising a graphical user interface;

a product database, communicatively coupled to the computer network, that contains a plurality of available telecommunications products, the product database being communicatively coupled to a plurality of providers of the plurality of available telecommunications products thereby allowing updating of the product database in real time; and

an expert system, communicatively coupled to the computer network, that is operable to rate at least two available telecommunications products within the plurality of available telecommunications products using dynamic calculation and based on a customer need;

wherein the expert system comprises computer executable instructions which allow a live human agent to perform selection of an available telecommunications product from the product database based on the rating of the at least two available telecommunications products during an interaction with a customer;

wherein the expert system generates output comprising a recommended telecommunications solution and a compatible telecommunications solution and presents the output to the live human agent via the graphical user interface, each of the recommended telecommunications solution and a compatible telecommunications solution being an alternative solution selected from the plurality of available telecommunications products within the product database, the recommended telecommunications solution having a rating that is higher than the rating of the compatible telecommunications solution; and

wherein the recommended telecommunications solution and the compatible telecommunications solution are communicated to the customer in real time after the expert system generates the output.

42. (previously presented) The expert system of claim 41, wherein at least one of the recommended solution and the compatible solution comprises at least one of a data network solution and an Internet access solution.

43. (previously presented) The expert system of claim 41, wherein the output further comprises an explanation for why the recommended solution was selected by the expert system.
44. (previously presented) The expert system of claim 41, wherein the expert system employs at least one of a dedicated Internet access guidance engine and a data network guidance engine to rate the at least two available products within the plurality of available products.
45. (Previously Presented) The expert system of claim 41, wherein the graphical user interface is operable to present information concerning at least one of the available products within the plurality of available products to the live human agent.
46. (Currently Amended) A plurality of software instructions stored on a media that, upon execution by a processing circuitry, are operable to recommend a product by using an expert system, comprising:
- a set of instructions executed by the processing circuitry that determines problem domain information during an interaction between a live human agent and a customer, wherein the problem domain relates to a telecommunications network configuration;
  - a set of instructions executed by the processing circuitry that determines need information of the customer during the interaction between the live human agent and the customer, wherein the need information relates to a telecommunications network configuration;
  - a set of instructions executed by the processing circuitry that inputs the customer need information into the expert system;
  - a set of instructions executed by the processing circuitry that transforms the customer need information into a trait, the trait being characteristic of a product of relevance to the customer as determined using expert system processing that is performed by the expert system, the product of relevance being selected from a plurality of available products; and
  - a set of instructions executed by the processing circuitry that rates a product within the plurality of available products using the expert system, wherein the product comprises a telecommunications network configuration; and

a set of instructions executed by the processing circuitry that presents an output to the live human agent, said output comprising a recommended solution, and a not-recommended solution, wherein the recommended solution and the not-recommended solution comprise alternative products selected from the plurality of available products.

47. through 50. (canceled)

51. (Currently Amended) A plurality of software instructions stored on a media that, upon execution by a processing circuitry, are operable to recommend a telecommunications network configuration, comprising:

a set of instructions executed by the processing circuitry that performs expert system processing to rate at least two available products within a plurality of available products using dynamic calculation and based on a customer need, wherein the products comprise a telecommunications network configuration;

a set of instructions executed by the processing circuitry that enable a live human agent to respond to a communication of a customer need by accessing the functionality of the expert system processing via the graphical user interface to perform selection of an available product from the product database based on the rating of the at least two available products in real time during an interaction with a customer;

a set of instructions executed by the processing circuitry that generates output comprising a recommended solution and a compatible solution and presents the output to the live human agent via the graphical user interface, each of the recommended solution and a compatible solution being an alternative solution selected from the plurality of available products within the product database, the recommended solution having a rating that is higher than the rating of the compatible solution; and

a set of instructions executed by the processing circuitry that prompts the live human agent with the recommended solution comprising a network configuration and the compatible solution to be communicated to the customer in real time.

52. through 65. (canceled)

66. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of available telecommunications products comprises a plurality of telecommunications network configurations.
67. (Original) The method of claim 66, wherein the rated telecommunications product comprises a telecommunications network product comprises a telecommunications network configuration.
68. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a network configuration solution to a customer, the method comprising:
- utilizing an expert system to obtain information from a customer regarding product needs of the customer via interaction between a live human agent and the customer;
  - presenting an interface allowing the live human agent to enter the information into a computer system, wherein the computer system comprises the expert system;
  - processing the information, wherein the act of processing is performed by the expert system within the computer system;
  - producing at least ~~one~~ three product solutions, wherein the at least ~~one~~ three product solutions are is produced by the expert system within the computer system, wherein the act of producing at least ~~one~~ three product solutions is performed in accordance with the entered and processed information, wherein said at least three product solutions comprise a recommended solution, a compatible solution, and a not recommended solution, and wherein said recommended solution, said compatible solution, and said not recommended solution comprise alternative solutions;
  - presenting the at least ~~one~~ three product solutions to the live human agent, wherein the act of presenting the at least ~~one~~ three product solutions to the live human agent is performed by the computer system; and
  - presenting at least a portion of the at least ~~one~~ three product solutions produced by the expert system to the customer, wherein the act of presenting at least a portion of the at least one product solution to the customer is performed by the live human agent.
69. (Original) The method of claim 68, wherein the act of processing comprises using fuzzy

logic to produce at least one product solution.

70. (Original) The method of claim 68, wherein the act of processing comprises using heuristics to produce at least one product solution.

71. (Original) The method of claim 68, further comprising presenting a plurality of product solutions to the customer.

72. (Original) The method of claim 70, wherein each product solution of the plurality of product solutions is qualified by a ranking selected from a plurality of rankings.

73. (Original) The method of claim 72, wherein the plurality of rankings comprise recommended, compatible, and not recommended.

74. (Original) The method of claim 72, further comprising providing a script to the live human agent, wherein the act of providing a script is performed by the expert system via the computer system.

75. (Original) The method of claim 74, wherein the provided script relates to the act of obtaining information from the customer.

76. (Original) The method of claim 75, wherein the script comprises one or more questions for the live human agent to ask the customer.

77. (Original) The method of claim 68, wherein the customer has no direct interaction with the expert system.

78. (Original) The method of claim 68, wherein the needs of the customer comprise telecommunications needs.

79. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 68, wherein the at least ~~one~~ three product solutions comprises a telecommunications network configuration solution.

80. (Original) The method of claim 68, wherein at least a portion of the needs of the customer are represented as data points.

81. (Original) The method of claim 80, wherein the at least a portion of the needs of the customer are represented as data points by the live human agent during the act of entering the information into the computer system.

82. (Original) The method of claim 80, wherein the at least a portion of the needs of the customer are represented as data points by the expert system during the act of processing the information.